

REMARKS

The Office Action mailed April 15, 2008 has been received and reviewed. By the present Response and Amendment, Claim 13 is canceled, and Claims 1, 4, 6, 7, 9-12 and 20 are amended. No new matter is introduced.

Claim 6 (or 8?) stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as allegedly indefinite. The basis for this rejection is unclear, as Paragraph 2 of the detailed action does not give an explanation of what is considered indefinite in Claim 6, and Paragraph 3 refers to Claim 8 as reciting "opening and preventing a housing" (which language is not in Claim 8). The original language of both Claim 6 and Claim 8 is believed to be clear, but Claim 6 has been amended to recite "upper and lower half-shells hingedly connected to one another." Along with the detailed description provided in Paragraph [00026] of the specification, and the drawing figures (for example FIGS. 1a, 1d, 2, 3, 4a and 5a), the claim language is certainly sufficient to inform one skilled in the art of the subject matter of the invention.

Claims 1-3 and 7-20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,228,100 to Schraga. Claims 1, 7 12 and 13 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,794,926 to Munsch et al. Claims 4 and 5 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,990,154 to Brown et al. Claims 21 and 22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,228,100 to Schraga in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,990,154 to Brown et al.

Applicant requests reconsideration of these grounds of rejection in view of the present claim amendments. Claims 1, 4, 7, 12 and 20 are amended to specify a plurality of lancets arranged in a circular array, with the lancet tips directed radially outwardly. These claims further recite that the lancets are interconnected to one another by a flexible web that allows the lancets to move independently of one another in a radial direction. The cited references do not disclose or suggest the presently claimed invention. The lancets of

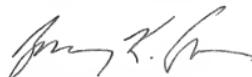
the Schraga '100 reference are not interconnected by any sort of flexible web, as claimed. The lancets of the Munsch '926 reference have tips that project transversely, rather than radially outwardly as presently claimed. And there is no disclosure or suggestion that the lancets of the Munsch '926 reference can move in a radial direction. The Brown '154 reference does not disclose any array of lancets, as this reference is directed to a single-lancet device.

Claim 10 is amended to specify that the lancets are arranged in a co-planar array that defines a firing plane, and further recites an advancing mechanism that drives a separated endcap of the lancet into contact with an inclined ramp and thereby moves the endcap out of the firing plane. Claim 20 similarly recites that the separated endcap is moved out of the firing plane. The Schraga '100 reference includes a pivotally mounted lever that is manually toggled to dislodge the tip guard. Schraga does not disclose or suggest any inclined ramp for moving a separated endcap out of a firing plane, as presently claimed.

CONCLUSION

In view of the amendments submitted herein and the above comments, it is believed that all grounds of rejection are overcome and that the application has now been placed in full condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicant earnestly solicits early and favorable action. Should there be any further questions or reservations, the Examiner is urged to telephone Applicant's undersigned attorney at (770) 984-2300.

Respectfully submitted,



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